



FOREST HEALTH

Forest health is the condition wherein a forest has the capacity across the landscape for renewal, recovery from a wide range of disturbances, and retention of its ecological resiliency while meeting current and future needs of people for desired levels of values, uses, products, and services. Since forest health can cover a wide range of issues, each individual landowner often times has a different understanding and idea of what forest health issues are important and which ones they should address on their property. Therefore, it is important to consider what your community's needs and understanding of forest health issues are and develop a plan to address them in conjunction with the broader forest health needs and issues of the entire community.

Some Reasons to Plan for a Healthy Forest

- A healthy forest is less susceptible to diseases and the uncontrolled establishment of invasive plants, which can out compete native species and disrupt the balance of forest ecosystems.
- By identifying environmentally sensitive forestlands, the functions and values they provide to the community can be protected.
- Forests with management goals to ensure native species diversity are more likely to be resilient against human induced impacts, such as runoff from development and erosion because they have the capacity to hold soil in place and filter the runoff.
- Forest that are healthy can provide recreational opportunities and resources for the long term because they will be able to meet the demands of the community while continually renewing itself.

Tools to Address Forest Health Across All Elements of Your Comprehensive Plan

- Identify development patterns and trends to prohibit development in environmentally sensitive forestlands.
- Develop an invasive species management plan and require invasive species control plans for all new development proposals.
- Avoid the use of invasive species and encourage the use of native species in landscaping.
- Require adequate buffers between forested lands and developments.
- Work across jurisdictional lines and with local organizations to cooperatively address forest health issues.



For more planning tools go to the
***Smart Forestry for Smart Growth
Planner's Toolbox***
on the web at



<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/forestry/SmartForestry>